

In lieu of a **NORTH TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (NTAS)** meeting for **December** there will be a **holiday party**. See page 2 for information.

**NTAS** meetings are **free** and visitors are always welcome.

#### Inside this issue:

President's Message	1
2025-2026 EC Nominations Needed	2
Monthly Meeting Location & Info	2
Brewster County Recon	3-6
Events & News	7
Holiday Party Info	8
Membership & Publication Info	8-10

# Benchmark

Volume 37, Issue 11

December 2023

## President's Message

Hello fellow NTAS members, I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday! We held our final meeting of 2023 on November 9<sup>th</sup>, and I would like to thank the membership who showed up in person and on Zoom for participating in an enlightening discussion with our guest, Jimmy Arterberry. The final meeting of the year was also the most well attended and I know Jimmy was appreciative of the opportunity to discuss Comanche history and archeology with us. If you missed the meeting or would like to watch the presentation and discussion again, the meeting is on our YouTube channel ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_c24pBK2BFI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_c24pBK2BFI)).

I am excited to share a couple of news items with you all. The first is that NTAS has donated \$575 to Texas Beyond History to remain a Sustaining Partner for 2024. Our membership not only matched the \$250 donation approved by our Executive Committee in October but exceeded it by \$75! Texas Beyond History is an invaluable resource to the Texas Archeological and educational community and we are thrilled to continue being one of their partners. The second piece of news is that through the diligent efforts of Jimmy Barrera and Gwen Durrant, NTAS was once again awarded a Humanities Texas Mini-Grant to support our Winter/Spring meetings



and presentations. Thanks to Jimmy and Gwen and to Humanities Texas!

In lieu of a monthly meeting we will be having the annual NTAS Christmas Party this month (see page 8 for details). Paula Vastine has graciously offered to host again this year. The party will be held at 301 Tulip Way in Keller on December 9 beginning at 5:30pm. If you're planning to come and know what kind of food you intend to bring, please let Paula know ([paulavastine@gmail.com](mailto:paulavastine@gmail.com)). I look forward to seeing you all there and if I don't see you before our January meeting, have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from me, Lauren, Rowan, and Frankie!

**Allen Rutherford**

## Connect with NTAS:

[facebook.com/NTXAS.org](https://www.facebook.com/NTXAS.org)

[www.NTXAS.org](http://www.NTXAS.org)

For general inquiries, please contact [info@ntxas.org](mailto:info@ntxas.org)

**North Texas Archeological Society**

## Members Needed for 2025-2026 Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee

Please consider how you can serve the NTAS community by volunteering to be on the Executive Committee for the 2025-2026 term.

If you are not interested in being on the Executive Committee, but are interested in finding members who are willing to serve in that capacity, please volunteer for the nominating committee!

If you are interested in volunteering either as an officer or as a member of the Nominating Committee for the 2025-2026 term, please contact Allen Rutherford ([president@ntxas.org](mailto:president@ntxas.org)).

## Update Your Calendar - NTAS Monthly Meeting Speakers

**January 11th: Jessica Lee Hamlin (Shumla)**

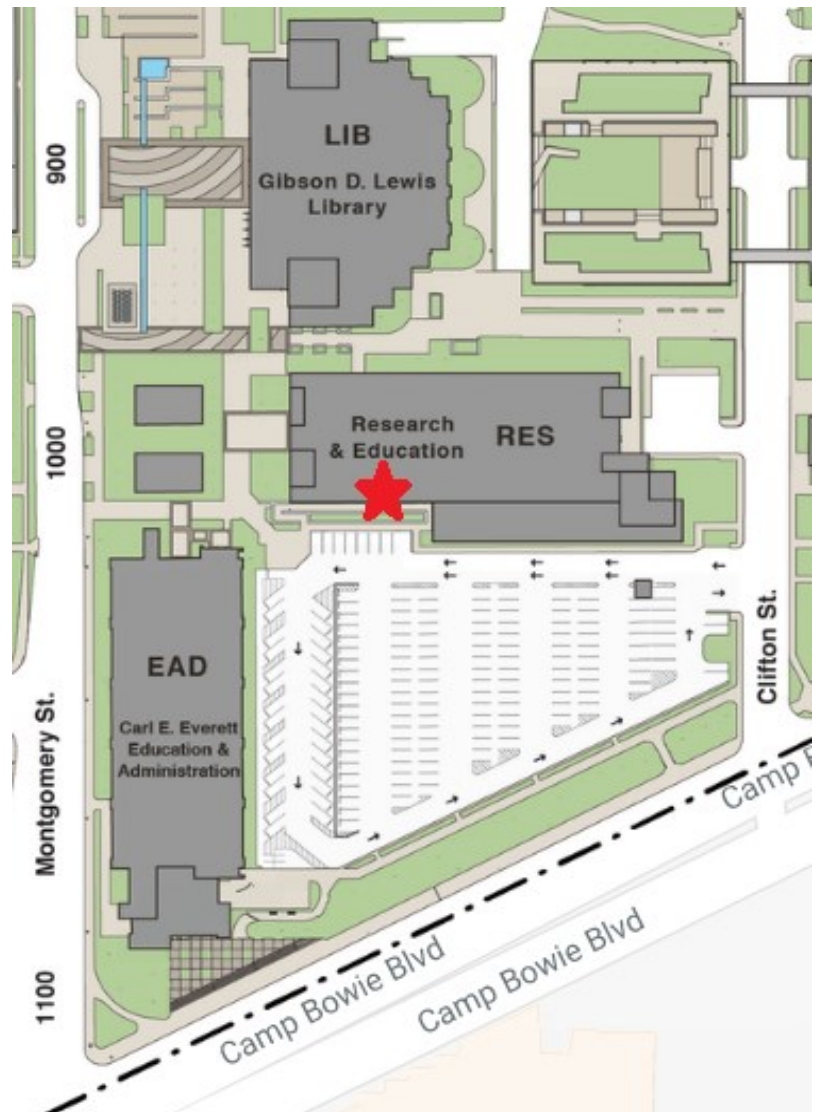
**February 8th: Charles Frederick (Geoarcheology)**

**March 14th: Lance Tahmahkera (My Comanche Heritage)**

## NTAS Monthly Meeting Location & Directions

NTAS meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month (except June and December) at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, 3500 Camp Bowie Boulevard, Fort Worth (in the **Research and Education Building, Room 114**), near the intersection of Camp Bowie and Montgomery Street.

Traveling west on I-30 from downtown, take the Montgomery Street exit. Turn right on Montgomery and continue to the five-way intersection at Camp Bowie. Turn right onto Camp Bowie, followed by an immediate left onto Clifton Street. Turn into the first parking lot on the left (**Administrator and Visitor Parking**). You will drive past an information booth as you enter the parking lot. Park on the far (north/west) end of the parking lot and enter the Research and Education building. Once you enter the building, turn right and proceed down the hallway to **Room 114**.





## Brewster County Recon

### *Jimmy Barrera*

On November 7<sup>th</sup> while on vacation in the Big Bend region I performed archeological reconnaissance that included a previously recorded rock shelter near Terlingua in Brewster County. This site visit originated through relationships built with the landowners of 41HD111 (Comanche Creek site) which NTAS recorded in 2022. Steve and Karen Adams invited me to visit their Terlingua property and secured permission for archeological reconnaissance of neighboring property for a total of about 100 acres in Brewster County (Figure 1). To connect Steve and Karen (along with their neighbors) with a local expert based in Brewster County, I invited Big Bend National Park archeologist Steven Schooler to join – as this property is located near the national park. Steven Schooler suggested we invite Tom Alex to come along. Tom is a retired Big Bend National Park archeologist and now a Texas Historical Commission (THC) archeological steward for this area; he is also very familiar with a previously recorded site that we visited.

Prior to performing the site visit I checked the THC's archeological database and other records to determine what is known about the area. Within the 100 acre area are two previously recorded archeological sites: 41BS428 (Gate #5 Painted Cave site) and 41BS1921 (Bundy's Triangle Cross Shelter site). Site 41BS428 was recorded in 1972 by the now defunct Coastal Bend Archeological Society. Site 41BS1921 was recorded in 2009 by the Texas Archeological Society's (TAS) Rock Art Recording Task Force (which included Tom Alex). Based on the site records, these two sites are mapped approximately 300 meters apart. To further collect records in advance of the site visit I contacted the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL) and asked if any additional records for either 41BS428 or 41BS1921 were available. The TARL staff kindly provided a copy of the original handwritten site form for 41BS428; which had a little more information along with sketches of projectile points and bifacial tools. I also spoke with Tom



*Figure 1. Reconnaissance area looking east showing cliffs along the mesa. Photo by Jimmy Barrera.*

Alex and Steven Schooler regarding their knowledge about the previously recorded sites. Tom let me know that the TAS Rock Art Recording Task Force was not aware of site 4IBS428 when they recorded site 4IBS1921 and stated that these two sites are likely the same site based on the records.

Tom and I discussed the 4IBS428 record which states that a “Mrs. Laurie of Alpine and others” were previous investigators. This means that prior to the 1972 official 4IBS428 site recording someone visited 4IBS428 and presumably informed the Coastal Bend Archeological Society folks about this site. Tom let me know that “Mrs. Laurie of Alpine” on the original 4IBS428 site file is a typo and that the name should be Mrs. Mariam A. Lawrence, former chairperson of the Art Department at Sul Ross State University in Alpine. According to Tom, Mariam Lawrence was known for visiting rock art sites in the Big Bend region during the 1970s with her art students and documenting rock art, and sometimes unfortunately applying materials to the rock art to preserve the paint (which we now know should not be performed). Tom checked his personal files and found a copy of the 1982 El Paso Archaeological Society (EPAS) Artifact (newsletter) volume 20 number 1-2 pages 152-170, which includes a report from Mariam Lawrence on a site she called “Mud Flat Shelter”. The Mud Flat Shelter report matches the location and description for site 4IBS1921 (Bundy’s Triangle Cross Shelter site).

Goals for the archeological reconnaissance were to visit site 4IBS1921 and the recorded location of site 4IBS428 to help determine if these are the same site or different sites, and to recon various areas around the 100 acres at the request of the landowners to determine if any other archeological sites are located on the property.

Tom, Steven, Steve Adams (landowner), and I first visited site 4IBS1921 and confirmed that this site is the same that Mariam Lawrence documented in the 1982 EPAS Artifact article. Site 4IBS1921 is recorded as a rock shelter measuring approximately 40 meters long by five meters deep, with a talus of burned rock extending 25 meters downslope from the dripline. 4IBS1921 has one panel of rock art (Figure 2) mentioned in the 2009 site form that is drawn and described in the 1982 article.



Figure 2. Viewing rock art at site 4IBS1921. Left to right: Steven Schooler, Steve Adams, and Tom Alex.  
Photo by Jimmy Barrera.



On November 7, 2023, we also made the following observations at site 41BS1921 that are not included in either the 1982 article or 2009 site form:

1. Evidence of recent looting at 41BS1921.
2. This site contains three mortar holes: one on a large boulder and two on a smaller boulder, along with 12 cupules on a large boulder.
3. The large boulder with cupules has an area smoothed and polished from working hides or other materials on the boulder (Figure 3). This smoothing and polishing was also observed on six smaller boulders at site 41BS1921.
4. Site 41BS1921 contains an annex rock shelter that measures five meters by two meters and is located ten meters northwest of the main shelter. This small annex shelter appeared to have been looted as evidenced by disturbed burned rock deposits across the surface along with a pull tab Budweiser can lodged in a crevice of the shelter.
5. Observed three mano fragments (all burned), and two non-diagnostic bifaces. We observed lithic debitage scattered across the surface of the burned rock midden deposits. Lithic raw material included black Hornfels chert, Burro Mesa chert, and other cherts.
6. Looter pits in the main shelter at 41BS1921 indicate that the deposits extend at least 20 centimeters below the surface, likely the deposits are deeper in areas. This is the only subsurface observation possible during the recon.
7. While the burned rock midden and talus (Figure 4) are noted on the 2009 form, there are really no further details on these features. The burned rock midden consists of dense igneous burned rocks mixed with an ashy matrix across the relatively level shelter floor. The talus consists of igneous burned rocks, lithics, and mano fragments along a very steep slope. The burned rock midden inside the dripline of the shelter appears to be in a dry rock shelter context, whereas most of the midden and talus deposit are exposed outside of the dripline.



*Figure 3. Large boulder with mortar hole, cupules, polishing, and petroglyph. The landowners' feet are immediately left of the polished area. Photo by Jimmy Barrera .*



- At some point in the not-to-distant past a massive boulder fell from the cliff face above the rock shelter onto the large boulder in the rock shelter that has mortar holes, cupules, polished surfaces, and a petroglyph – splitting the polished boulder into two pieces. The massive boulder must have fallen after the initial use of the polished boulder as the massive boulder now immediately covers areas that are polished and partially covers the petroglyph.

The recon continued around some of the cliffs and to the top of the mesa feature containing site 41BS1921. Then we reconned near the recorded location of site 41BS428 but due to time (and energy) we were not able to access this area during the recon. We observed a light lithic scatter 300 meters west of site 41BS1921 in an area with raw chert and petrified wood gravels. The recon was unfortunately not able to 100 percent confirm that sites 41BS428 and 41BS1921 are in fact the same site, however, one of the original recorders of 41BS1921 believes these are the same site and we did not observe any evidence to suggest otherwise. Future reconnaissance of this property is planned to finally resolve this site recording discrepancy which will result in a site update form submitted to TARL. This Brewster County example is provided for NTAS to show that site records are valuable, various, and that a collaborative effort is best!



Figure 4. Burned rock midden talus: left, looking upslope toward shelter; right, looking downslope from shelter. Photos by Jimmy Barrera.



## Archeological Events & Opportunities

### 29th East Texas Archeological Conference

Tyler, TX

February 17, 2024

<https://files.constantcontact.com/64fd1d19b001/3f3eb6a1-8aa4-4e1a-8f67-587fdaa3e107.pdf?rdr=true>

The East Texas Archeological Conference is hosted annually to bring together people interested in the archeology and cultural heritage of east Texas.

**Location:** Main Lobby and other rooms in the Soules College of Business at UT Tyler.

**Hours:** 9 AM until 4 PM. Registration begins at 8:30 AM.

**Fee:** \$20 which includes lunch.

**Hotel:** Homewood Suites, 3104 Golden Road, Tyler, TX. 903-593-7880 and mention East Texas Archeology for conference rates of \$116. Breakfast is included.

### TAS Ceramics Academy

Fort Worth, TX

April 27-28, 2024

<https://www.txarch.org/ceramics-2024>

This exciting academy will be held at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge in North Texas. The academy will introduce the importance of archeological ceramics in terms of technology, chronology, dating, trade, subsistence, and cultural identity. Definitions and origins of ceramics technologies, how pottery was decorated, analysis of individual sherds, how pottery is classified or “typed”, and how we interpret these data are aspects of pottery analysis. The Ceramics Academy is back in person and will provide numerous hands-on exercises, including making pots from modern clay, and identifying vessel types, decorative techniques, and firing.

## Bolivar Archeological Project in the Spotlight Again

The Austin American-Statesman featured the Bolivar Archeology Project, which NTAS members volunteered with in Winter 2021 in an article titled “The Story of Their Lives.” This article focuses on the results of the excavations at the Tom Cook blacksmith shop and the use of community collaborative archeology to connect archaeological sites to living descendants of Tom Cook.



From left, blacksmith Kelly Kring, descendant Howard Clark and archaeologist Douglas Boyd look at artifacts from Tom Cook's blacksmith shop on July 18 at Stantec. When TxDOT wanted to widen a road in Denton County, they encountered the remains of an old hotel and a Black-owned blacksmith shop from the late 1800s. PHOTOS BY MIKALA COMPTON/AMERICAN-STATESMAN

## 2023 NTAS Holiday Party Details

**Paula Vastine**

**Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all of you! The annual NTAS Party will be December 9, 2023.** We will gather at 301 Tulip Way, Keller, TX 76248. The festivities begin at 5:30 pm **but if you would like to help set up, please come around 4 pm.** Our party will be in the Villas of Stone Glen Clubhouse, directly in front of the entrance gate (and across from Paula's house). The gate code is 3020 enter but it may be open. You may park in front of any house as long as you avoid the driveway and fire lanes. Some parking is available behind the Clubhouse. This is right off of FM 1709, also known as Keller Parkway, Golden Triangle Blvd, and Southlake Blvd. The exit off of I-35 Golden Triangle is now open.

**Please bring a food item for the covered dish dinner e.g. entrée, veggie, salad, or dessert.** Soft drinks, tea, water, and coffee will be provided as well as dinner rolls, and all dining utensils. We will have Christmas Punch and you are welcome to bring your own preferred drink.

**After dinner the fun really begins with the Archeo Gift Exchange. The rules for the game are to bring a wrapped gift for the tree, take a number from Santa, and when your number is called, pick out a gift from under the tree OR steal it from another. The THIRD time a gift is stolen it is FROZEN. Be creative, bring or make an archeologically related gift. They are cherished (and occasionally brought back the next year for re-gifting).**

## What Can You Do with NTAS? What Can NTAS Do for You?

### **Involve NTAS in Your Field, Lab, or Reporting Project**

Contact [vpofprojects@ntxas.org](mailto:vpofprojects@ntxas.org) if you know of a field, lab, data collection, or reporting project that could use the skilled labor of experienced and knowledgeable NTAS members.

### **Contribute Photos and Memories of NTAS Events**

Photos are a great way to showcase what NTAS is all about. We'd love to share your NTAS experiences with the world immediately following NTAS events! Please send your images and captions to [internetchair@ntxas.org](mailto:internetchair@ntxas.org). By providing these photos, they may be used on the NTAS website and social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

### **Newsletter and Journal Content**

Contribute highlights from NTAS volunteer opportunities, summaries of archeological research and field projects, announcements and links to events, exhibits, media, and publications, etc. by sending them to [publicationseditor@ntxas.org](mailto:publicationseditor@ntxas.org).

NTAS is now looking for articles to fill the 2024 Journal of the North Texas Archeological Society. Please consider submitting an article about your North Texas research, fieldwork, or other related topics. The lead author must be an NTAS member in good standing for the 2023 calendar year. For submissions and inquiries regarding the journal, please contact [publicationseditor@ntxas.org](mailto:publicationseditor@ntxas.org). Volume I of the Journal is now available for purchase on Amazon. Visit [amazon.com/dp/B0BJYD52JP](https://amazon.com/dp/B0BJYD52JP) or scan the QR code:



**NTAS scholarships are now available to -ANYONE- who applies for TAS Academies, the TAS Field School, and the annual TAS Meeting.**

Please visit the NTAS scholarships webpage to submit your application. Apply now!

<https://ntxas.org/scholarships>





## North Texas Archeological Society (NTAS) Membership Application Form

Online membership form and payment option available at [ntxas.org/join-and-renew](https://ntxas.org/join-and-renew)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City\State\Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Type and Fees (Membership Term: January to December)

- New  Family Membership - \$25  
 Renewal Total Family Members \_\_\_\_\_  
 Individual Membership - \$20  
 Student Membership – \$10 (18 or older student with minimum half-time course load. Those under 18 must contact NTAS in advance of applying.)

### Communication Preferences: I/WE want to be added to the following lists:

- General Announcements - *For Meetings, Events, Publications, Membership Dues and NTAS Updates*  
 Personal Updates - *For personal updates on NTAS members such as illnesses, and obituaries*

**Digital copies of the newsletter are included with every membership.** If you are interested in receiving paper copies, please contact the Publications Editor ([publicationseeditor@ntxas.org](mailto:publicationseeditor@ntxas.org)) or Secretary ([secretary@ntxas.org](mailto:secretary@ntxas.org)) for pricing.

**Donation:** Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  General Fund  Memorial Scholarship Fund  BaahKu Project

**Media Release:** I/WE DO -or- DO NOT (circle as appropriate) give permission to NTAS to use my/our image (photographs and/or video) in any NTAS publications, website, or social media.

**Code of Ethics (signature required):** I/WE PLEDGE THAT I/WE WILL NOT INTENTIONALLY VIOLATE THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ANY FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL ANTIQUITIES STATUTES CONCERNING CULTURAL RESOURCES OR ENGAGE IN THE PRACTICES OF BUYING OR SELLING ARTIFACTS FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES OR ENGAGE IN THE WILLFUL DESTRUCTION OR DISTORTION OF ARCHEOLOGICAL DATA OR DISREGARD PROPER ARCHEOLOGICAL FIELD TECHNIQUES. I/WE UNDERSTAND THAT FAILURE TO FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES WILL PROVIDE GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION FROM THE SOCIETY.

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your Membership Form with check or money order made payable to:  
 North Texas Archeological Society  
 P.O. Box 24679 Ft. Worth, TX 76124

Thank you for renewing or joining the North Texas Archeological Society! We will send an email to confirm your membership once your payment has been processed. We look forward to seeing you at our next event!

## Welcome, New Members!

Jimmy Arterberry  
Jonathan Bevill & family  
Ryan Breslawski  
Frederic Frankel  
Rio McGowan

## Donors

Tamara Fezell — *Texas Beyond History campaign*  
Mark Davies — *Texas Beyond History campaign*  
Katrina Nuncio — *Texas Beyond History campaign*  
Robert Lovett — *Texas Beyond History campaign & General Fund*

## NTAS Aims & Objectives

The purposes of the Society are

- (1) the promotion of scientific archeological exploration and research,
- (2) the preservation and conservation of archeological materials and sites,
- (3) the interpretation and publication of data pertaining thereto, and
- (4) education of the public to the aims of archeology.

## NTAS - Preserving the Past for the Future

### Executive Committee

**Allen Rutherford**  
*President*

**Gwen Durrant**  
*Treasurer*

**Genevieve Freix**  
*Historian*

**Stephen Lowe**  
*Vice President*

**Thomas Standefer**  
*Secretary*

**Hannah Rainey**  
*Internet Chair*

**Brian Luetchford**  
*Vice President of Projects*

**Jimmy Barrera**  
*Immediate Past President*

**Molly Hall**  
*Publications Editor*

## Newsletter Submission Deadlines

The newsletter submission deadlines are two weeks prior to the monthly meetings, and upcoming deadlines are listed below.

January Newsletter: December 28

February Newsletter: January 25

March Newsletter: February 29

April Newsletter: March 28

May Newsletter: April 25

July Newsletter: June 27

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